targeted for completion by February, 2004. The work is in progress and the project is likely to be completed within its sanctioned cost of Rs.294.70 crores.

Four Laning of Road from Sikandra to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh

2477. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the work on four laning of road from Sikandra to Varanasi in the U.P. is not progressing as per the schedule and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) the progress made so far on this project; and

(c) by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) to (c) There are five contract packages in this section. Main reasons for delay are attributed to slow process of tree cutting, shifting of utilities, land acquisition, quarry problems and slow mobilization by the contractors. The section is targeted to be substantially completed by December, 2003.

Construction of Golden Quadrilateral Project under BOT

2478. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have written to the State Governments for upgrading the roads?

(b) if so, whether his Ministry would entertain anyone interested in constructing stretches of the Golden Quadrilateral connecting the four metros or the North-South and East-West corridors under the Build Operate Transfer scheme;

(c) whether under the Central Road Fund, an assistance of about Rs. 1,000 crore per year is being given to the State highways;

(d) if so, the assessment made by his Ministry in regard to investment of the fund by them; and

(e) what is the progress made so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of National Highways. The development and maintenance of all other roads is the responsibility of the respective State Government. The Central Government however, provides funds to the States for development of State Highways, Major District Roads and rural roads under the Central Road Fund. Development of National Highways is a continuous process and is taken up in phases based on Annual Plans subject to availability of funds.

(b) Anyone interested in constructing the stretches of Golden Quadrilateral and the Corridors through Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) can participate under prescribed procurement procedure. However, on Golden Quadrilateral, all projects excepting 84 km long Allahabad bypass, have been awarded.

(c) Yes, Sir. The assistance is provided for development and maintenance of State Highways and major district roads.

(d) and (e) Total accruals for State roads out of Central Road Fund is Rs. 2927 crores since 2000-2001. However, an amount of Rs. 881.96 crores has so far released to States, based on utilisation.

Private Sector Investment in National Highways Development Project (NHDP)

2479. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the latest estimates, the second